



BURLINGTON
PARKS
RECREATION
WATERFRONT

Parks & Recreation and Harbor Commission Meeting

Minutes

January 5, 2016

Commission Present: Bossange, Kaplan, Hurley, Hanson and Khadka

Staff Present: Bridges, Cahill and Putzier

The meeting was convened at 5:33 p.m. by Commission Chair Kaplan.

Approval of Agenda

A Motion was made by Bossange to approve the agenda as amended by moving item III. Burlington College Acquisition Funding after item IV. Public Forum and add item II.5. Discussion of Smoking Ban Decision from City Council, second by Hurley, motion carried.

Approval of Consent Agenda

Approval of Minutes of December 1, 2015 Meeting

*waive the reading, approve the minutes and place them on file

Motion was made to approve the consent agenda by Bossange, second by Hurley, motion carried.

Discussion of No Smoking Ban in City Parks

Bossange stated that originally the Commission had requested no smoking in all parks and then reduced the ban to certain areas of the parks. Bossange attended the City Council meeting where the proposed ordinance change was discussed for approval and the ordinance failed. Stated that he felt the Commission needs to respond to the action taken by the City Council and had a drafted letter proposal to send to the City Council and wanted to discuss with other members.

Bossange added that the student body at Burlington High School were very upset by the decision and wanted to continue discussions on the ban.

Bossange suggested leaving the wording in the Ordinance about having designated sidewalk and parking lots for smokers and monitor for proximity of the parks and playgrounds. Hanson disagreed stating that it defeats the purpose of keeping smoking out of the park by creating a smoking space, does not like the accommodation and suggested putting the Ordinance on the City ballot and skip going through City Council process.

Kaplan recommended that the letter Bossange presented conveyed well the sentiment of the Commission and would like to send to the City Council and then decide later how to move forward with a possible ballot question.

The Commission agreed to send out the letter regarding the City Council decision to fail the proposed ordinance and would wait for further feedback and then move forward from that point. Also agreed to have the concerned questions written by the students to accompany the letter to the City Council, all initialed the letter from the Commission. The record should reflect the appreciation of the Commission for the tireless efforts from Bossange on this item.



Public Forum (Time Certain 6:00PM, 3 min. per person time limit)

Public forum opened at 6:00 p.m. by Kaplan

Eric Dague, Austin Drive resident stated that he would like to see the bike path plowed, he is primarily a runner and would love to see the path plowed and explained some of the reasons for not plowing were not real acceptable to him.

Joanne Hunt, Leonard Street resident, stated that she really appreciated the work on the no smoking in parks as a nurse and added that she felt questions remained at the City Council level, felt many conflicts of interest in the decisions with the land acquisition for Burlington College and also that it is not the best deal financially for the conservation funds to be used, said it was hard to find out when meetings were happening and would like to see the process slow down.

Public forum closed at 6:08 p.m.

Burlington College Acquisition Funding

Bridges reiterated that the property is privately owned and the current owner is under no obligation to the City to engage in any participation but was convinced that the City and owner could come up with a better plan and it would be a true public ownership of the land and that is of the utmost importance to keep open and public legally, the alternative is single family homes and smaller strips of green space. The ultimate goal is to keep as an open space and protected and owned by the public. Valuation was done by income assessment due to the value of what could be located on the site. With this agreement the City will be protecting endangered species and environmental spaces. This piece of property is the highest value of open space and property where the buyer could make the most money which increased the price. Part of the agreement discusses storm water placement and uses and does not allow for any skipping of steps, the space will still need to have water managed and minimize the water that goes into the system as a whole and utilize better. There is a clause in the agreement that requires a collaborative use and cannot impede. All permits must go through DRB for approval. The Conservation Board approved the request for funding with the stipulation of how the storm water is managed.

Gil Livingston put the agreement and land sale into context by stating the diocese (first owner) was going to do single family houses and had a set of objectives. The sale of the property after being sold twice before selling to a private buyer had never before engaged the City in the process. Was not favorable but the current situation has achieved the stone house for others, second high demand for garden space, linkage to existing trails and the bluff overlooking the Lake would remain and also a space for recreational open space and Texaco beach would be publicly owned. The current owner also stated that in regards to the storm water, it would be located in far north site adjacent to the bike path and under both ravines that are not used by public or near the open space and at no time would any storm water management happen on the functional areas of open space owned by the City.

Hanson said she is still opposed to this project and is concerned about the intensity of the development and acknowledged no other place to discuss it and does feel it is the diocese fault for not including the City in earlier purchase discussions and subsequently Burlington College. Just feels deeply that it is wrong to have the land developed to the extent that it is and will not vote in favor of the acquisition for funding, feels it will be a mistake in the future.



Bridges said that his response to this is that the reality is this is a private property ownership and if the City does nothing it will not keep the property open for the public and would be more likely to look like what Burlington College was proposing and felt it would ultimately turn into another large development and Farrell said he would have a single family development and much fewer homes taking over the entire space if he did not enter into an agreement with the City.

Bossange shared a flyer that was given to him as to why the purchase would not work and one reason was the height and was told the area allows for 60 foot buildings, approximately 5-6 stories, which would eliminate surface parking, due to slope can have parking under the building, nothing will be taller than current building. Act 250 criteria and part of local permitting will need to be followed. Bossange also added that he was very upset with part of the sentiment of the letter, stating that if you have a house it is easy to say you don't need more of them but to those that do not have a home, it is a very big concern and went on record to say that it really bothered him that this would be vocalized as it seems too be elite.

Hurley asked for clarification of the asking price and the value and was told yes it is dramatically lower than the appraised value.

Kaplan said that it is often a pleasure to sit and have these conversations to afford all to discuss.

Motion for approval of Conservation Legacy funds toward the purchase of the former Burlington College property by Bossange, second by Khadka, roll call was made, Opposed; Hanson, In Favor; Bossange, Hurley, Kaplan and Khadka. Motion passed with Hanson opposed.

2016 Fee Schedule

Bridges referenced his memo for the recommended fee changes and stated that the fiscal year falls in the middle of the busy season and therefore need to make changes now instead of at the beginning of the fiscal year. The Marina and Campground are big revenue generators and very fortunate that the Arena and Recreation Center break even most of the time. Very popular recreation programming and State licensed program currently and the desire for people to continue to utilize and would like to have fair fees and that is what impacts Burlingtonians most.

Shelter fees that include walks and runs will be the biggest change as the shelter is not the only part in use, the bike path and surrounding areas are also being used. Proposing a \$500 fee for maintenance and upkeep and the true value and use of what is being utilized and maintained. Increased cost on staff and better accountability on behalf of the renter. Another change is in the policy to make sure expectations around rentals are met by setting a window for reservations from May through October to start on November 1st. Many times this will be weather and staff dependent. Proposed rate increase on transient dockage, very minimal and getting pressure to be in line with other facilities, late season dockage slight fee, early dockage fee to help promote more and get in early before seasonal boaters arrive, create family parking pass for one family to utilize pass on multiple cars within the family, variable rate change at the Pease parking lot by kiosk and charge flat \$3 hour rate to be more consistent and will be adding pay by cell and slight increase in tent site to keep price at the middle fee level, also adding a half day fee for the event site and dump use increase.

Hanson asked about overnight parking at Perkins Pier and had concerns with people staying in vehicles overnight and Bridges said he would follow-up with Moreau but felt this was an old verbiage and could



add criteria that stated unoccupied vehicle may be all that is necessary. Also asked about the difference in fee rental at 242 and the Miller Center and the \$100 difference and was told by Bridges it has to do with security and staffing fees at 242 and has not changed. Asked about non-resident fees and was told that we charge on the higher end of other towns and do not want to go higher to keep participants. Also questioned non-resident fees for gardens and wanted to make sure that residents got into the gardens first and also see if higher fee should be charged to non-residents. Bridges said that he would look into the resident/non-resident fees for gardens.

Khadka asked if it was possible to do an inventory of how many gardeners are resident versus non-resident and Bridges stated that he would look into getting an audit of the gardens.

Motion to approve fee changes as proposed with the understanding that Bridges will get back to the Commission with answers at the next Commission meeting on Gardens and Perkins Pier overnight parking questions by Hanson, second by Hurley, motion carried.

Landscaping Plan for Bikepath Rehabilitation in Urban Reserve

Bridges stated that an orange dot had been placed on each tree that is to be removed and explained that there will be more trees planted than removed, will plant native species, will remove impervious asphalt and will look dramatically different, vast majority of people feel this is part of the path that is an open space that is in bad shape and the City will be reclaiming. Will be adding fitness equipment funded through UVM Fitness Center, also will have sunscreen dispensers eventually and bluetooth beacons. There will be a significant amount of removal, a lot of poplar and no trees of large size significance.

Hanson asked if will plant some canopy type trees in the space and Bridges said red maple and many others and some are quite big. Posted all information of web site and indicated on blog and in several spaces to make sure that all have the information on the front end and sharing. Hanson suggested having some local fitness persons help with the fitness equipment suggestions and Bridges said they have been working with doctors, PT, physicians and all kinds of professionals and under the advisement of the medical community, nutritionists etc.

Perkins Pier Boating Infrastructure Update, Expected Executive Session

Motion was made to go into executive session at 7:25p.m., where premature disclosure of information could put the City at a substantial disadvantage by Hurley seconded by Hanson, motion carried.

Bridges stated the department had won the grant for an archeological study and has been completed, now the bidding has been finalized to satisfy obligation of the grant.

Motion was made to come out of executive session by Khadka, second by Bossange at 7:54 p.m.

Director's Items

Bridges spoke to plowing of the bike path, said that he was willing to plow when able but not under any circumstances would it be salted and often can't get equipment on the path to plow in certain areas. Last year staff experimented with compacting down and currently due to weather the ground never froze and has an ice band all over the place.

Commissioner's Items

Khadka stated that he would not be at the next commission meeting as he would be out of town.



Kaplan stated that the Vermont Health Department is putting together a bunch of PSA's and would like to get BPRW involved in the project as well. She was also asked by some to have artificial shade at the beach for people that want to be at the beach but can't be in the sun. She will keep Bridges updated and will let him know who the contact person is.

Adjournment

Motion was made to adjourn at 8:00 p.m. by Khadka, second by Bossange, motion carried.

DRAFT